



City of Santa Barbara
Planning Division

Memorandum

DATE: February 23, 2006

TO: Single Family Design Guidelines/Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance Update Steering Committee

FROM: Heather Baker, AICP, Project Planner *HB*
Jaime Limón, Design Review Supervisor *JL*

SUBJECT: SFDG/NPO Update Package Transmittal Memo

Staff is pleased to transmit a draft Single Family Design Guidelines/Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (SFDG/NPO) "Update Package". The NPO Update Package consists of three parts: Staff Report, Draft Updated Single Family Design Guidelines, Draft Updated Architectural Board of Review Guidelines, and a Summary of Recommended Municipal Code Changes. A Staff report is also included in this transmittal, described below.

- I. **Staff Report –NPO Update Package Overview- Background and History**
The Staff report provides an overview of the NPO update process, a brief history of completed steps, and a quick summary of the major proposed changes to ordinances and guidelines. An "Issue Paper Results Summary" is also included as an Exhibit to document the "follow through" of general Steering Committee discussion topics.

SFDG/NPO Update Package

- II. **Draft Updated Single Family Design Guidelines (beige cover).** The Guidelines are meant to be used by both single family home developers and the Architectural Board of Review. The Guidelines provide a framework of ideas to help applicants achieve neighborhood compatibility, sensitive site design and aesthetically pleasing structures. The Architectural Board of Review can also reference the Guidelines to help determine if a project is consistent with required Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance findings.
Attachment: Staff recommended changes made to Single Family Design Guidelines subsequent to Steering Committee Recommendations.
- III. **Draft Updated Architectural Board of Review Meeting Procedure and Landscape requirement Guidelines (salmon cover).** The ABR Guidelines cover ABR meeting practices, Design Review project routing, and

application and noticing procedures. Only portions of the ABR Guidelines with proposed changes are included in this Update Package for review. Parts II and III of the Guidelines are printed with "track changes" showing, so that proposed changes can be seen with underlining and strike-outs.

Attachment: Staff recommended changes made to ABR Guidelines subsequent to Steering Committee Recommendations.

- IV. Summary of Recommended Municipal Code Changes (blue cover).** This Summary describes proposed changes for the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance as well as other parts of the Municipal Code. Revised code updates will first be available at the Ordinance Committee review stage as the project nears adoption.

Attachment: Staff recommended changes made to Municipal Code subsequent to Steering Committee Recommendations.



City of Santa Barbara California

STAFF REPORT

REPORT DATE: February 23, 2006

TO: Steering Committee & All Interested Parties

FROM: Planning Division, (805) 564-5470
Jaime Limón, Design Review Supervisor *JL*
Heather Baker, AICP, Project Planner *HB*

SUBJECT: NPO Update Package Overview-Background & History

RECOMMENDATION: That the Steering Committee considers the scope of changes to the NPO and discuss any changes if needed

DISCUSSION:

The purpose of this staff report is to provide an overview of the NPO update process, a brief history of completed steps and a quick summary of the major proposed changes to existing ordinances and guidelines. Additional detailed information is available as separate attachments.

I. Background/History

The Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance (NPO) was adopted in late 1991 and expanded the purview of the Architectural Board of Review (ABR) (and in some cases the Planning Commission) to include the review of proposed single-family residences based on certain size thresholds. The NPO also established and mapped the Hillside Design District and required review in these districts. The NPO was designed to essentially apply to two-story large single-family residential projects on in-fill or hillside lots. In the Hillside District, the NPO was designed to apply to single-family residential and one-story duplex projects on lots with over a 20% slope and/or projects proposing 250 cubic yards of grading or more.

Over the past decade, a number of challenges have arisen with the implementation of the NPO. Staff and many community members are eager to resolve issues associated with single-family development, which the NPO was adopted to address. In particular, the lack of specific standards to assist in determining neighborhood compatibility has led to lengthy public ABR hearings, disagreements between the public and the ABR, and appeals of ABR decisions. The current NPO exempted from design review some substantial two-story home additions meeting miscellaneous design criteria. Some community members are concerned that these projects, which are not reviewed by the ABR, are incompatible with their respective neighborhoods.

Steering Committee Creation

In January 2004, City Council approved an NPO Update Work Program, authorized some consultant funding and appointed a Steering Committee to assist Staff in the update of the Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance and Single Family Residential Design Guidelines. Over the past two years, Staff has led discussions, worked with the Steering Committee and conducted an extensive public review process, largely without consultant assistance.

Temporary ABR Ordinance Adopted

Due to the discussions regarding establishment of FAR standards at the NPO update Steering Committee meetings and fearing new more restrictive review standards for size of homes, applications for 2nd story additions increased in 2005. In August of 2005, given that the ABR update was taking longer than was originally expected, Staff provided a progress report on the NPO to City Council. At that time, Staff recommended the immediate adoption of the temporary ordinance as a reasonable temporary approach to regulating tall and large development proposals in residential neighborhoods.

If no action were taken on a temporary ordinance, Staff expected that more people would attempt to initiate and design large additions to avoid ABR review before the new NPO guidelines would take effect in 2006. In September 2005, City Council agreed with Staff's recommendation and adopted a temporary ordinance to ensure that certain tall and large single-family residential development did not remain exempt from ABR.

Goals of NPO Update

The following list represents some of the goals initially outlined as part of the first phase of the NPO Update:

- Address issues associated with the NPO since it was adopted.
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the ABR review process.
- Create fewer circumstances where ABR appeal hearings are needed to achieve appropriate project design.
- Simplify ordinance requirements.
- Ensure a clear and efficient design review application process; assurance that ABR standards, guidelines and review are sufficient to ensure compatible neighborhood designs.
- Provide for a revised review process that does not severely impact ABR hearing times and that expanded purview does not create a backlog of applications waiting to get on agendas.
- Provide the ABR with additional tools for design analysis.
- Improve and clarify unclear design terminology i.e. (height, bulk, scale).
- Consider the use of Floor to Lot Area Ratios (FARs) to develop an improved level of regulatory certainty.
- Develop a better understanding of what constitutes neighborhood compatibility with clear

- approval standards and concise Design Guidelines.
- Re-establish a community-wide consensus on neighborhood compatibility issues and preferred designs through the completion of a Neighborhood Visual Survey process.
- Improve project noticing standards.
- Strengthen Good Neighbor Policies in areas relating to privacy or private view impacts.

II. Steering Committee Review/Neighborhood Outreach

The NPO Steering Committee met and discussed 11 Issue Paper topics over the course of two years in order to ascertain and develop a better understanding of some of the issues outlined for discussion. Public hearings on the various topics and proposals were held at approximately 27 meetings where the public was invited to attend and offer comments and input. Staff has made presentations to several neighborhood groups, neighborhood associations, Realtor Groups and the AIA. As part of an early outreach to neighborhoods, a Visual Preference Survey (VPS) was also completed and photographs of various home additions were presented through a series of public workshops in selected neighborhoods throughout the City.

These VPS photographs of home designs were evaluated, rated and discussed to ascertain what neighbors preferred in their respective neighborhoods. The completion of the visual rating exercise made it apparent that there appears to be more review needed on second story development that can pose more impacts to neighborhoods and cause more concern among neighbors.

Expected Project Outcomes

The following lists expected outcomes as part of the NPO Update included in an initial work program report accepted by City Council in February of 2005.

1. Application triggers revised
2. Permit routing methods by incentive options
3. NPO Municipal Code simplified
4. Public noticing standards reviewed
5. Hillside Design District boundaries reviewed
6. Piecemeal development discouraged
7. Time limits established for NPO findings
8. Potential to expand projects eligible for administrative staff approval

III. Proposed NPO Update Changes

The proposed scope of NPO Update changes can be grouped into the following four major categories: Municipal Code Ordinance Amendments, Application Review Process changes, Single Family Design Guideline Amendments, and ABR Design Guideline Amendments.

A. Municipal Code Amendments (and codification of new zoning standards):

- Revise ABR triggers to consider previous projects completed within the last two years as a basis for ABR review.
- Establish new proposed Floor to Lot Area Ratios Zoning Ordinance Standards to limit size of two story single family homes in all zones throughout City for lots less than 15,001 square feet.
- Establish new proposed FAR Zoning Ordinance Standards incorporate a stepped tiered approach to allow for 85% and 100% maximum FAR levels. An option has also been recommended for discussion by Staff for a Planning Commission Modification application process whereby special consideration can be given to grant FAR exceptions with higher review standards.
- Establish new proposed Floor to Lot Area (FARs) Zoning Ordinance Standards to limit size of two story single family homes in all zones in Hillside Design District to no more than 85% of maximum FAR levels on lots less than 15,001 square feet when either of the following design criteria are met, development proposed on portion of a parcel greater than 30% slope and building height exceeds 25 feet in height and where 700 cubic yards in proposed.
- Expand Hillside Design District boundaries to include most 20%+ slope properties. Introduction of new NPO Hillside Design Area maps.
- Update NPO Findings, including strengthened findings regarding privacy, landscaping, noise, lighting and private view issues associated with the Good Neighbor Guidelines

B. Application Review Process Changes:

- Revise current application review trigger to eliminate PC triggers for homes in excess of 6,500 square feet and grading in excess of 500 cubic yards instead these projects are to be routed solely to the ABR.
- Revise current application review trigger to require ABR review of all 2nd story additions type projects, increasing the scope of two story project review beyond the Temporary Interim Ordinance.
- Expand project types eligible for Staff Administrative approvals including minor additions (<500 sf) to residences which meeting specific approval standard criteria including a Green Building design incentive.
- Revise application review trigger to require ABR review of all reroofs and terracing projects in Hillside Design Districts, regardless of slope.
- Update various topics as discussed by the Steering Committee in Issue Papers itemized and included in this staff report found in Exhibit A.

C. Single Family Design Guideline Changes:

- Add photographs and more drawings to illustrate guidelines.

- Improve explanations of “compatibility”, “neighborhood”, “size”, “bulk”, and “scale” and how to visualize grading quantities.
- Provide more detailed information to explain how to design homes compatible with their neighborhood.
- Include explanation of proposed Floor to Lot Area Ratio house size limitations and guidelines program.
- For Hillside areas: more information provided regarding the importance of balancing “stepping” development down a hill with program size and minimizing grading for hillside home development. The new guidelines address apparent heights of structures on hillsides. Also, include guideline to suggest limiting total grading quantity to less than 700 cubic yards of grading for hillside development.
- Added Sustainability concepts.
- Added additional Good Neighbor guidelines and illustrations. Also, communication tips included to encourage positive neighbor discussions regarding potential projects.
- Removed most landscaping guidelines to avoid duplicative documents; refer the reader to the Architectural Board of Review Guidelines *Part II: Landscaping*.

D. ABR Guideline Changes:

- Amendments and updates to the ABR Guidelines will primarily identify increased scope of administrative review standards and explain meeting or application processing requirements.
- New proposed FAR ABR Guideline to limit size of two story single family homes in all zones throughout City for lots greater than 15,000 square feet.
- Include new story pole guidelines included.
- Expand Administrative Staff Review criteria standards.
- Insert new photographs into the Part II: Landscaping.

Staff believes the NPO Update proposal package is expected to achieve the majority of expected outcomes and incorporates the vision, goals and directives as first outlined to City Council in 2004. It is anticipated that there will be significant public participation involved in the release of the various drafts in the next phase of public comment period. Several planned public hearings are scheduled to allow Staff the opportunity to answer questions and fully explain the various elements comprising the NPO update package.

NPO Steering Committee Issue Paper Results

Staff recommendations were made to the NPO Steering Committee during the discussion of the various issue papers presented. The Steering Committee made recommendations and motions during 27 meetings. The follow through these recommendations received are outlined in Exhibit A. The Steering Committee, however, expressed concern that the update package as a whole would cohesively fit together given the quantity of recommendations. Staff compiled the Steering Committee’s

recommendations into the various NPO Update package documents. During the compilation process, input from additional Community Development Staff members was received in some cases for the first time. Also, additional City Attorney input was received. As a result of the additional analysis, changes were made to the update package documents for the Steering Committee's consideration. The changes which Staff is recommending which differ from previous Steering Committee recommendations are tracked in attachments to each of the update package documents. The attachments reflect the new suggested changes. This Steering Committee Issue Paper Results Summary and memo attachments to the Update Package will "drop out" when it proceeds to the Planning Commission.

Draft Ordinance Adoption Schedule

Staff working with the City Attorney's Office will prepare draft ordinance amendments for review after additional input is received from the NPO Steering Committee and the public at several scheduled public hearings. Draft Ordinances are not expected to be available until later this summer after sufficient progress is made to better define the types of amendments that the City will propose for adoption. Review, discussion and public comments are expected to be received at ABR, HLC, Planning Commission and City Council Ordinance Committee meetings planned beginning in September of this year. (A tentative meeting schedule is available for review on the City's website and in Planning Division.)

Budget/Financial information

Planning Staff will provide a report update on potential budget implications as the process moves forward. Staff will provide specific recommendations on whether any staffing adjustments are needed or if possible changes to the make-up of the ABR are necessary in order to implement the proposed NPO update package as finally developed.

Exhibit A: NPO Steering Committee Issue Paper Results dated February 22, 2005

Issue Paper Results Summary

Issue Paper A: Volume, Bulk & Scale

Single Family Design Guidelines updated.

Issue Paper B: Neighborhood Definition

Single Family Design Guidelines updated.

Issue Paper C: Calculation Methods: Square Feet, Slope, Grading & Height

- Municipal Code to be updated.
- Single Family Design Guidelines updated.
- ABR Guidelines updated.
- Standard Project Statistics Forms Implemented.

Standard Project Statistics Forms Implemented.

Steering Committee Recommendation. A standard form for listing square-foot project statistics be provided online in an Excel sheet format that can be filled out and copied onto plans.

Implemented: A downloadable Excel form with embedded formulas and directions is now available on-line¹. The form has successfully been used by applicants and is of great help to Zoning plan check and Design Review staff. The forms are now required to be printed on plans and will likely be required for Building Counter submittals for cases which underwent Design Review in early 2006. Upon NPO Update adoption, the forms will be updated as attached to delete separate main building footprint calculations versus the rest of the site. This breakdown will no longer be needed because Design Review routing review triggers are not proposed to be based on grading quantities under the main building footprint.

Origin: Meeting #5, #11, #25 and Issue Paper C.

Issue Paper D: Floor to Lot Area Ratios & Lot Coverage

Municipal Code to be updated.

Single Family Design Guidelines updated.

Issue Paper E: Modifications

Implementation to be carried out via Zoning Administration section Supervising Planner.

Issue Paper F: Project Noticing

- Staff Hearing Officer process resulted in noticing changes (First Hearing Noticing, Noticing Radius for Projects Subject to Other Review Bodies, and On-Site Notice Posting)
- ABR Guidelines updated.

¹ http://www.santabarbaraca.gov/NR/rdonlyres/34B02343-5955-4BCC-8C4A-20E41A4281E3/0/Statistics_Form.xls

- Municipal Code to be updated.
- Noticing Purpose/Intent updated on Planning & Zoning Counter handouts.
- Interested Parties and Neighborhood Association Noticing Improvements Partial Implementation and Update

First Hearing Noticing.

Steering Committee Recommendation: Noticing required to occur at the first hearing on a project.

Discussion: This provision has already been implemented by the Staff Hearing Officer ordinance update. It requires all Design Review projects that require another land use action by the City Council, the Planning Commission or the Staff Hearing Officer to be noticed at the first concept review hearing to the same extent which would be required at any other subsequent hearing. The Ordinance amendment went into effect on February 13, 2006.

Origin: Steering Committee Meeting 11 & Meeting 13 Recommendation #7.

Implementation Notes: Amendments to § 22.68.065 completed.

Noticing Radius for Projects Subject to Other Review Bodies.

Steering Committee Recommendation: Make the noticing radius for ABR the same radius as it is for other hearing review bodies.

Discussion: This provision has already been implemented by the Staff Hearing Officer ordinance update. Staff advised the Steering Committee that applying a 300 foot noticing radius to all projects could overwhelm the ABR with public comment. Therefore, Staff proposed an amendment that equalized the noticing radius for projects that require another land use action by the City Council, the Planning Commission or the Staff Hearing Officer, but not for all Design Review projects. Other single family Design Review projects are sufficiently served by the current 100' noticing radius requirements.

The noticing radius for ABR hearings for projects that require another land use action by the City Council, the Planning Commission or the Staff Hearing Officer has been amended to comply with the greater of the two noticing requirements. In many cases, this results in a noticing radius of 300 feet. Projects that require NPO review by the Planning Commission are noticed at a 300 foot radius.

Origin: Meeting 16.

Implementation Notes: Amendments to § 22.68.065 and 22.68.070 completed.

On-Site Notice Posting.

Steering Committee Recommendation: Require noticing on-site.

Discussion: An allowance has been made for on-site posting and other alternative noticing methods as part of the Staff Hearing Officer Municipal Code updates. The Ordinance amendment went into effect on February 13, 2006.

Origin: Meeting 12 Recommendation #9 regarding Issue Paper F.

Implementation Notes: Amendments to § 22.68.065 completed.

Noticing Purpose/Intent.

Acknowledge additional direct purposes of noticing:

- Provide additional insight to the ABR and HLC.
- Increase opportunities for mutually agreeable outcomes between interested parties.
- Public's right to know and participate.

Discussion: Staff has updated the Design Review Planning Counter handout to include acknowledgement of the first two bullet items listed for this recommendation. City Attorney staff work will be needed to address this recommendation in the mailed notice template sent in mailings and to update the Planning Counter handout with the third bullet item.

Implementation Notes: ABR Guidelines, § 22.68.065, and Planning and Zoning Counter handout.

Origin: Steering Committee Meeting 12 Recommendation #1 (consensus support).

Tenant Noticing Update.

The Steering Committee recommended that Staff explore feasibility of including nearby tenants in project notice mailings.

Discussion: This recommendation was found to be infeasible by Staff after research was completed. Goleta is the only local jurisdiction which has tenant noticing. Research revealed that the County Assessor does not have tenant address information. Private databases could be accessed for tenant mailing label noticing, but the databases often contain inaccurate information, such as multiple incorrect unit addresses where multiple units are located on one parcel. Also, accessing such private databases routinely would be cost prohibitive. In reality, the tenant noticing underway for Goleta projects is generally only likely to notice one tenant on each parcel regardless of the number of units, unless labels are created at considerable time and/or expense to the applicant. It appears that on-site notice posting as described above effectively expands noticing to interested neighbors.

Origin: Meeting #12, Recommendation #6.

Interested Parties and Neighborhood Association Noticing Improvements Partial Implementation and Update.

A couple of administrative measures are being taken to address a Steering Committee recommendation to improve the interested party noticing process.

1. All Planning & Zoning Counter Staff have now been trained to enter interested party information in Permit Plan for both a parcel and case, this way interested parties will also be notified of future applications automatically.
2. Design Review and Zoning Administrative Staff are collaborating regarding the possibility of automatically populating neighborhood association contact information into Permit Plan parcels so that appropriate predetermined homeowners associations are automatically notified of projects.

Origin: Meeting #12, Recommendation #5.

Issue Paper G: Good Neighbor Policies

- Good Neighbor Policies as Handout Implemented
- Lighting Ordinance update work pending.

Good Neighbor Policies as Handout Implemented. Routinely provide Good Neighbor Guidelines as a handout to applicants.

Implementation Notes: The existing Good Neighbor Policies were added to the "Design Review Submittal Packet" handout in December 2005. The updated Good Neighbor Guidelines will replace this portion of the handout after NPO Update adoption.

Origin: Meeting #13 Recommendation #1.

Issue Paper H: Form-Based Zoning

Guidelines include many new graphics per Steering Committee discussion.

Issue Paper I: Hillside Issues

Municipal Code to be updated.

Single Family Design Guidelines Updated.

ABR Guidelines updated.

Issue Paper J: Application Routing & Trigger Mechanisms

Municipal Code to be updated.

ABR Guidelines updated.

Single Family Design Guidelines updated.

Issue Paper K: Story Poles

Architectural Board of Review Guidelines updated.